

*The University of Alberta Department of Music presents:*

# WEST AFRICAN MUSIC ENSEMBLE



ROBERT KPOGO, DIRECTOR  
with guests  
Wajjo African Drummer and Dancers  
Tendai Muparutsa & group

Saturday, March 28, 2009 at 8:00 pm  
Convocation Hall, Arts Building, University of Alberta



DEPARTMENT OF  
**MUSIC**  
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



**PROGRAM**

Welcome	Dr. Kwasi Amenu- Tekaa (Master of Ceremony)
	Dance                      Atsiagbekor
	Wajjo drummers and dancers
	Tendai Muparutsa & group
Greetings	Dr John Akabutu (Ghanian Consular General)
	Dance                      Adevu (Hunter dance)

**Intermission**

Short Address	Dr Michael Frishkopf (Founder)
	Story telling
	Wajjo drummers & dancers
	Dance                      Gahu
	Tendai Muparutsa & group
	Dances                      Gota

**West African Music Ensemble, 2008-2009**

Instructors – Robert Kpogo, Wisdom Agorde  
Master Drummer – David Descheneau  
Teaching Assistant – Tendai Muparutsa  
Volunteer Assistants – Cari Fiesen, Grace Chapman

The **West African Music Ensemble**, studies the polyphonic and polyrhythmic music of West Africa with particular focus on the Music of Ewe people of Ghana, Togo and Benin. This music combines song, dance, and percussion. As each component is crucial to the experience of Ewe music, all members participate as dancers, singers, and drummers. Founded in the fall of 1999 by Michael Frishkopf, the West African Music Ensemble is regularly featured in the Centre for Ethnomusicology’s “World Music Sampler” and the University of Alberta International Week as well as occasional special events. The Ensemble is fortunate to own a complete set of authentic West African instruments for use by registered members of the group.

**Members**

Debora Beaver	Allison Luff	April Poetker	Ananda Doram
Jacqueline Massar	Sara Maskiewicz	Stanley Mah	Gina Smith
Kevin Wong	Katrina Campos	Marielle Virata	
Rachael King	Suzanne Daugela	Sarah Gardner	

### **Wajjo African Drummers and Dancers**

Formed in 1990, Wajjo African Drummers and Dancers introduce traditional African music to a Western audience and create through collaboration with musicians from other ethnic backgrounds and indigenous musical tradition that is a reflection of Canada's rich cultural diversity.

### **Tendai Muparutsa & group**

Tendai Muparutsa is a PhD student in Ethnomusicology at the University of Alberta. He is also a current Teacher Assistant of University of Alberta West African Music Ensemble. He plays music from Zimbabwe, mbira, marimba, dance and singing. I started playing in October 2008 with Marie Claire Diom, Nicole Le Bihan, Chance Martin, Matthew Hawken and Angela Hobson. We are a small beginning group and we have so much fun doing marimba music. My group has played in very few concerts such as the International week, World Music Sampler last November at Convocation Hall. We also played at Inner City High school for students.

### **West African Music Ensemble dances**

Atsiagbekor/gbekor is a contemporary version of the Ewe traditional war dance. The movements of the present day version of this dance are mostly in platoon formation. Reconnaissance, surprise attack and hand to hand combat are the stylized forms of the modern version of this dance. The main dance is fast paced and draws upon battle maneuvers for certain episodes, such as planning the attack, advancing and retreating. The modern version of Atsiagbekor is performed for entertainment at social gatherings and at cultural presentations.

Gahu/agahu was created by the Egun speaking people of Benin. Its popularity spread to the Badagry area of Nigeria where Ewe fishermen encountered it and shared it, with their people upon return to Ghana. In the language of the creators, Gahu/agahu means "airplane"-in reference to an event that occurred during its inaugural performance. As the Gahu/Agahu spread, it has collected song texts in many languages including, Egun, Yoruba, Ewe, French, and English.

Gota was originally a dance for medicine men of the ancient kingdom of Dahomey, now Benin, in West Africa. Today, Gota is performed for social entertainment. The synchronized stops and starts of the drums and dancers lend the dance an air of suspense and excitement.

Adevu (Ade-hunting, Wu "Vu": dance) is traditionally a professional dance honoring the hunter in Ghana, Togo and Benin. During the hunting season, any hunter who kills a big animal such as buffalo, lion, hyena, bush cow, pig or cat is given a special ceremony by the priest and priestess. The belief is that these big animals have souls so the hunter gives the animal a funeral so its spirit won't come after him. In these ceremonies the hunter is recognized for his skills by the priests in transe perform an exorcism so that the hunter was able to outwit a big animal. Nowadays, the dance is used for social entertainment.

**Music X44, July 6-24, 2009**

Meeting for Departmental consent will be held at first class  
LCL B1 MTWRF 1400 1615 FAB 2-7

Director: Robert Kpogo

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